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“HOMAGE TO CATALONIA”¹: A GLANCE TO BARCELONA ARCHITECTURE THROUGH THE MILANESE ARCHITECTURAL MAGAZINES OF THE '50S-'60S

Marco Lucchini

Associate professor.

Politecnico di Milano, Italy
Faculty of Architecture, Urban Planning Construction Engineering
Department of Architecture and Urban Studies

Gaspar Jaen Y Urban

Associate professor.

University of Alicante, Spain
Faculty of Architecture
Department of Graphic Expression, Composition and Project

ABSTRACT

The mutual exchange between Barcelona and Milan since the '50s and the '80s analyzed by the standpoint of the dissemination of the culture supported by the media popular at those time that means the magazines. The interrelation between the two cities by one hand was a way to escape from the suffocating control of the Francoist dictatorship. By the other side was to disseminate the School of Milan conception of modernism, far from the myth of the technology and closer to context and a critical view of the history.

Key words: Barcelona, Milan, Casabella, Domus, architecture, mutual exchange.

¹ Homage to Catalonia is an account written by George Orwell about his involvement in Spanish Civil War

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1949 between Barcelona and Milan arose an architectural and cultural exchange which lasted over three decades involving explicit and implicit professional relations as well personal friendship between architects of the two cities. These correspondences were continuous and they flourished in abundant works of architecture, although from different principles.

But this connection was not only one way, but back and forth, because throughout the second half of the 20th century, not only Milan influenced Barcelona, but also Barcelona in turn influenced Milan. For a few decades there was a mutual fascination between the architectonic culture of both cities, due not only by architectural and urban issues, but also by, political and economic matters.

The relationship between Barcelona and Milan between the '50 and the '80 of the 20th century in some respects was one of the engines that led to the great economic and cultural re-launch of Barcelona after the establishment of democracy in 1979 and the Olympic Games in 1992, which have turned the city into a world-class tourist and monetary landmark.

There are of course many points of contact between Barcelona and Milan but in this paper we will focus, on the media that allowed the dissemination of ideas as well as the circulation of knowledge and people; they were the magazines, the journeys, the participation to the conferences, and the personal friendships.

If we would periodize the epiphany of Barcelona's architectural culture in Milan we can consider two different and successive phases: the first, focused on the '50s and '60s, refers to the connection between Gio Ponti, Coderch and the *Domus* magazine; the second, corresponds, above all, to the relationship between Ernesto N. Rogers, (and later on Gregotti) *Casabella* magazine, and Oriol Bohigas, which began in the mid of the '60s and continued until the Olympic Games.

2. THE V NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND THE IX TRIENNALE

Both Italy and Spain suffered the fascist dictatorship but what really affected the Spanish cultural life was the autarchy. Francoist regime wrapped the whole country in a suffocating autocracy closing the borders so that architects and artists were ruled out from any contact with foreigner intellectuals.

But after the Nazi-fascist defeat, Franco government was considered by the U.S.A. a possible ally in the cold war so he got a loan to support economy and re-opened the borders.

The outstanding event was the V National Assembly of Architects. It was held, between May 10th and 18th, 1949 and organized by the General Directorate of Architecture, with Prieto-Moreno as general director, and the Superior Council of Architects' Associations. The events took place in Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca and Valencia, with trips by boat between these cities, in an obvious emulation of the IV CIAM held in 1933. The National assembly was a milestone in the evolution of Barcelona and Milan relationship. Infact Gio Ponti (1897-1979), a well known architect, whose career spanned from the Novecento to the Modernism, and director of the *Domus* magazine as well, attended the meeting; he had been invited by the General Directorate of Devastated Regions to visit Spain. (Fig. 1) Another remarkable speaker was Alberto Sartoris (1901-1998), an Italo-Swiss architect, historical of the Modern Movement, who, from the '30s until his death maintained a continuous relationship with Spain.



Fig. 1. Gio Ponti while is speaking at The V Asamblea Nacional of Architecture. Source: [28, 6]

The National Assembly has several remarkable consequence but, above all, Gio Ponti and Josè Antonio Coderch became friends and they began to exchange ideas and opinions about architecture and their professional activity.

In 1951, two years after the V National Assembly, another very important event for the resumption of architectural modernity in Barcelona occurred. In Milan since May to September the IX Triennale² was taking place and Coderch was in charge of designing the pavilion, thanks to the effort of Gio Ponti which had ensured that the Catalan architect was included among the Triennale commissioners. The Spanish Pavilion, in spite of its extreme simplicity, had an extraordinary success between the public and the criticism, both for the formal solution and for the content.

However, the good achievement (at least from the Spanish point of view) was caused mostly by Coderch reputation, and pushed the Catalan³ plastic culture (architecture, design, sculpture and painting) in an international frame. Certainly this was the first outcome of Spanish modernist design abroad after the civil war.

The venue was barely 70 square meters, but it offered “an authentic evocative essay: a kind of synthetic exercise designed to exhibit the quintessence of Spanish modernity” [20, 94].

As one can see in the photographs, in that room there were only three elements: a straw-faced wall with glass shelves where handicraft objects, modern sculptures and Miró's painting were presented. The objects were illuminated from below by seven multicolored spotlight that stucked directly out of the wall; the opposite side was a white Mallorcan shutters with wide slats, manufactured, like all the furniture, by the Llambí carpentry

² The Triennale is an exhibition of architecture which has been held every 3 years since 1933 in Milan, at the Palazzo dell'Arte (1931-1932), a building designed by Giovanni Muzio. Cf <http://www.triennale.org/chisiamo/storia-e-mission/>

³ The result was that, curiously, the Spanish pavilion was practically the Catalan pavilion because,.

workshop, which framed the photographs of Gaudí and Ibiza folk architecture. On a low shelf, shaped as a grand piano, recent industrial and artistic products, among which a set of modern chairs, were exhibited. The presence of the straw and the slats has been interpreted as a symbol of the vernacular tradition while the curved shape foresaw the Coderch's research about organic and fluid space that will be developed in Ugalde house and Barceloneta building.



Fig. 2: The Spanish Pavillon at IX Triennale of Milan. Source: [2, p. 147]

According to Antonio Piza among the documents for the IX Triennale project there is a very first sketch for the Ugalde house (1951) (fig.4), whose final amoeboid shape recalls the table of the Spanish Pavillon. This configuration, in turn, may be considered one of the most original interpretation of the synthesis between Mediterranean tradition and modern culture [20].

An immediate consequence of the IX Triennale was an increasing influential of Barcelona architecture in the Milanese cultural environments, so that the relationship which had begun two years earlier, with the V National Assembly of Architects, was getting better and better establishing international and long lasting links among the younger and restless architects.

3. CODERCH, DOMUS AND GIO PONTI

Having say that it was not coincidental that modern Barcelona architecture was published in Milan (and probably in Italy) for the first time in number 240 of the magazine *Domus* (November 1949), with an article entitled "Dalla Spagna" written by Ponti (the magazine director), as a result of his stay in Barcelona a few months earlier, on the occasion of the V National Assembly of Architects mentioned above. This article coped with the topic of the purity of traditional architecture, taking as an example spontaneous constructions seen in Ibiza, the so called "architectures without architect" that impressed the architects from Milan due to "some surprising suggestions of purity for our work and some surprising coincidences with the modern taste" [22, 1]. The interest of the architecture of Ibiza is something that, on the other hand, had already been highlighted by Le Corbusier and the

members of GATCPAC at the beginning of the '30s, but now Ponti raised it as a lesson to be followed by the young

Spanish architects. They were pursuing a "pure expression" of architecture in order to give meaning to their works in the context of a Barcelona where too many recent constructions seemed to be just a "real estate" product

The catalan architect Manuel Valls (partner of Josè Antonio Coderch) wrote a thank-you letter in Italian to Ponti, stating that he, and his team-mate Coderch, were very encouraged to convince the clients to build houses with a patio: "I have read your criticism with interest and satisfaction and from now on we will try to convince owners to make patios in their homes" [20, 90].

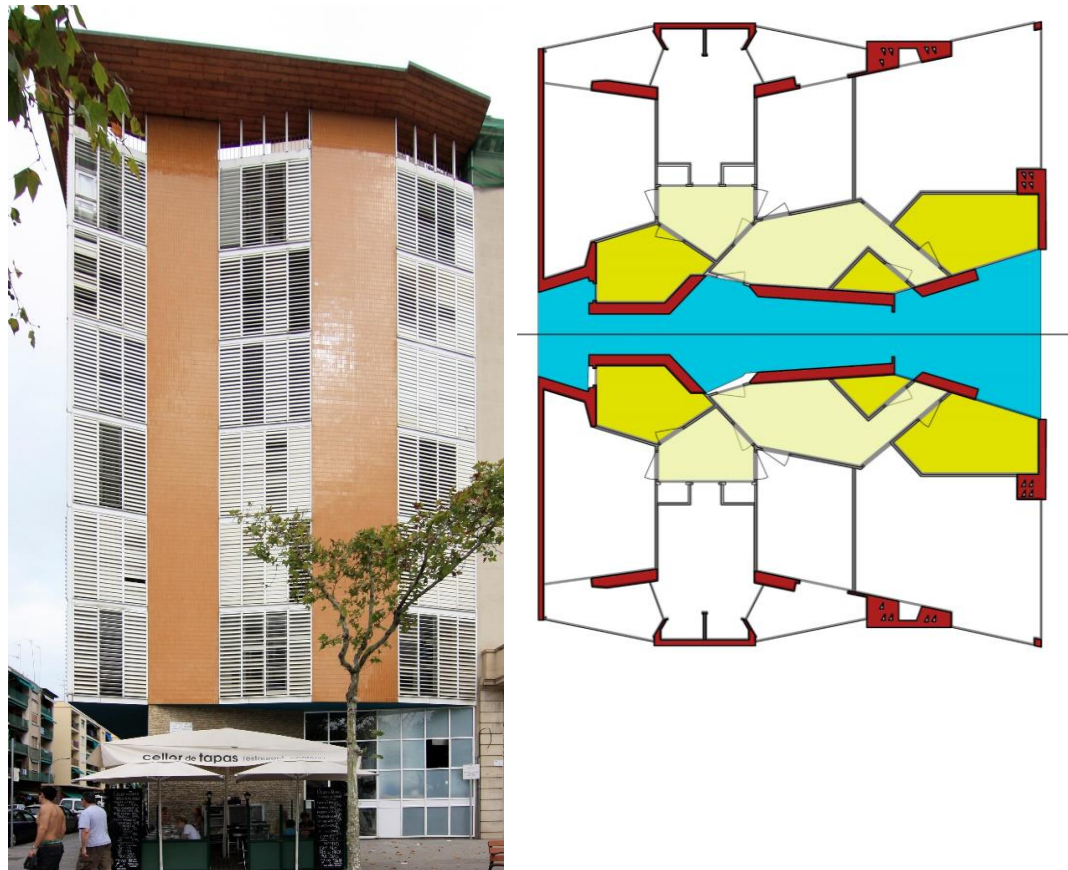


Fig. 3: Coderch-Valls: ISM house at Barceloneta. Source: photo and redraw by the author

Further on many articles on Catalan and Spanish architecture were systematically publishing in *Domus*: some concerned works by Coderch himself ("Una piscina", n. 258, May 1951, p. 26); others his partner Manuel Valls ("Casa a ventaglio", n. 282, May 1953, pp. 12-13), or Correa and Milá, the favorite disciples of Coderch ("Sulla costa Catalana", n. 296, July 1954, p. 11).

A few years later, in 1955, *Domus* published, with a text by Ponti, the best-known work in Italy of Coderch, the ISM⁴ houses at Barceloneta [23]. On this occasion, Ponti invited Italian architecture students to include Spain and the work of the Coderch studio in their training itinerary, since, on the one hand, "Coderch can be considered a young teacher, for his work

and for moral integrity that inspires it" and, on the other hand, "Spain has new architects and new values, it is a country where authentic expressions have vital depth" [23,8].

Gio Ponti's enthusiastic vision implied that the great Spanish modern architecture was emerging in a powerful but intuitive way, without schools, theories, debates, or controversies, only through the presence of the romantic "Spanish genius", that he saw embodied in Coderch.

Ponti's deep affinity with Coderch was based on a common vision of the domestic space construed as the primary reference for architecture and as the center of life. Both Coderch and Ponti were relatively insensible to the morphology of the city and its future, going instead for an aesthetics of the house keeping care of any aspect of it from the arrangement of the space to the details of furniture design.

One of the best known outcome of the mutual relationship Barcelona and Milan was the correspondances which interwove Coderch ISM house and Gardella Borsalino house the first built at Barcelona the second at Alessandria.

In Coderch's building, we can see a very particular floor plan configuration which has been a paradigm of the housing arrangement in Barcelona (fig. 3). We are speaking of the so called "H model floor" plan that is similar to a wide flange beam in which the web would correspond to the staircase and the flanges would be reserved for the sleeping and living areas. This broad structure is built following a bilateral symmetry in which the central core, other than containing the stairs and services, works as a symmetrical axis.

The H model floor plan was likely a typological achievement to sort out an efficient use of the rather large building plots in Barcelona's urban fabric: this allowed architects to place sanitation services and staircases in the central part of the building (usually quite dark), ventilating and lighting it with the help of small courtyards and patios; the relationship between solid and void gives the building its characteristic H shape.

In the typical ISM house floor plan the staircase is in the centre of the building echoed by other vertical components alongside it in which the principal functions are found: clearly identifiable is a central vertical section, corresponding to the staircase, a second section containing utility rooms for bathrooms and kitchens, an intermediary section that accommodates bedrooms and living rooms, and the last section, perimetric, comprised between the load bearing structure and the external envelope. This case of organising the building by vertical blocks is present in all H model types.

The load bearing walls and external envelope are inclined in an arrangement of oblique angles that dilate and compress space, giving it a unique formal characteristic. Coderch provides this solution starting from a traditional orthogonal layout and successively introducing deformations [1].

This geometry makes a large portion of the walls and elements forming the external envelope angled in respect to the building's symmetrical axis. This choice is probably due to a desire to improve the project, from the experience gained in the Ugalde building with organic forms and from the desire to comply strongly with the order of nature [2]. The inclined geometry deforms the building's central core and the envelope's walls, decreasing, in the spatial layout, the importance of the bedrooms' orthogonal partitions that become subordinated to the furniture, which in turn is treated as one of the space's main protagonists.

⁴ ISM stands for Istituto Social de la Marina; the building was a subsidized house for fishermen and seamen.

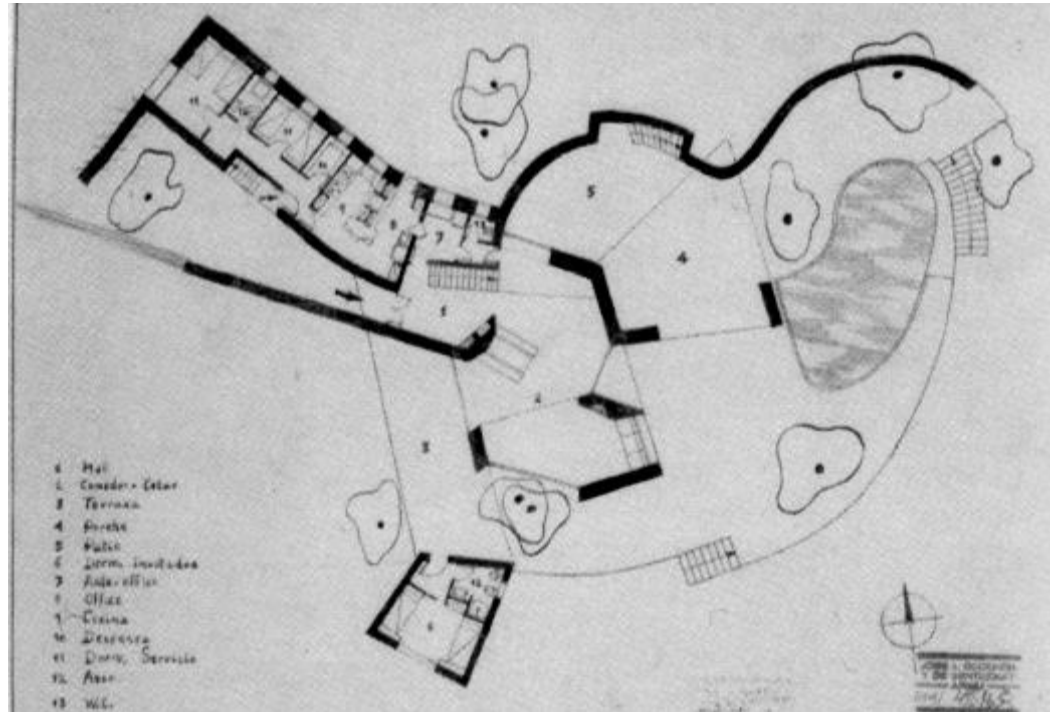


Fig. 4: Ugalde house. Source: [20]

The presence of numerous centre points and inclined geometries combined with the corner entrance to the living room and bedrooms determines a greater fluidity of the apartments' internal circulation, making the relationships between rooms more dynamic than in buildings using only orthogonal walls.

The Borsalino house (1949-1952) by Ignazio Gardella is a well known "counterpart" of ISM building. The building is unanimously considered a paradigm of the ability of Italian Modernism to combine rationalist research with improvements in quality of living and of interior space, with the specificities of the Milanese school of thought, aimed at enhancing the relationship with context and history [17, 99].

The building is composed of two independent blocks joined at the thinnest side. Each block contains two apartments with a circulation system that is based on a central path, coinciding with the longitudinal axis that ends in the walk-through living room. The building's perimeter walls are angled at 15 degrees compared to the centre line of the building in a way that deforms the interior spaces. Such deformations are particularly noticeable in the living rooms where the volume containing the main bedroom protrudes into the living space.

The compression and expansion of space, the manner in which the walls' geometry is dealt with and certain structural similarities demonstrate analogies with Coderch's ISM house in Barcelona. Both buildings present wall surfaces that are curve-like, even though they are actually constructed with broken lines. But the likeness between Coderch and Gardella is more complex than the Italian architect's mere influence, also chronologically unlikely⁵; Gardella served as an important reference in Barcelona's architecture during

⁵ The Borsalino house preceded by some years the Barceloneta building and was published for the first time in July 1953 in *Domus* and in *Casabella* in december of the same year. The definitive projects for the ISM building were approved in February and May 1953. The preparation of the definitive project for the Borsalino building occurred in 1950, at the same time as Coderch decides to alter the inclination of the walls in 1951-1952. Coderch's direct knowledge of the Borsalino building is therefore unlikely, while a correspondance, in the sense imagined by Baudelaire, can be proved.

the 1950's, sharing with Coderch the same empirical and concrete approach to architectural design as well as the same ability to interpret a site's characteristics, adapting them through personal expression. The Borsalino building and the ISM building share the same spatial and structural concept that emanates from a dynamic relationship between geometric deformations, pathways and positioning of staircases. Each of the two buildings is a key to interpreting the other.



Fig. 5: Gardella: Borsalino house. Source: photo by the author

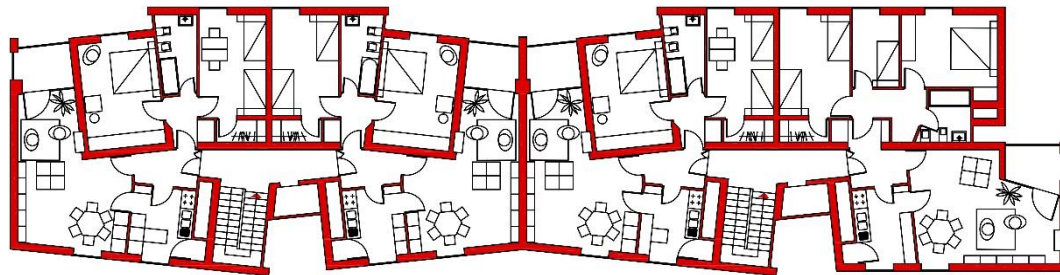


Fig. 7: Coderch's article "Non è di genii che abbiamo bisogno". Source: [10]

Going back to *Domus*, the magazine also published for the first time “They are not geni-uses what we need now”, the celebrated theoretical article, and one of the few texts that Coderch wrote throughout his life, including the laconic memoirs of his projects; in the same issue there was also an extensive and well-documented report, with excellent photographs by Giorgio Casali, the house on Calle Bach and some houses in Cadaqués, by Correa-Milà, or Coderch-Valls. Thus, the whole number of the magazine offered an almost monographic character, since most of the pages were dedicated to Catalan architecture. Specifically, the article on the building on calle Bach contained a statement of deep and sincere esteem for Coderch and Spanish architecture: “once again we are happy to repeat to Spaniards that we love our admiration for Coderch and, with him, for the other Spanish architects who appeared and who will appear in our pages”, a current of sympathy that was due both to the skill of the architects and to “the values of architecture and of men” [24.1].

4. CASABELLA AND E. N. ROGERS

The magazine *Casabella-continuità*, directed by Ernesto Nathan Rogers since 1954 to 1965, was a fertile ground for experimentation, where different points of view were interwoven by the collaborators flanking Rogers, namely Vittorio Gregotti (born 1927), editor-in-chief from 1957, and editors Giancarlo De Carlo (1919-2005) and Marco Zanuso (1916-2001). The cultural line of the magazine was characterized by “pluralism” and by an interest in tradition understood as a relationship between progress and, history and popular culture [3].

This conception aroused oppositions and divergences, both external and internal. In fact, Giancarlo De Carlo, an architect close to the approaches of the milanese MSA (Movement of Studies for Architecture) and to orthodox view of modernism moved away from the staff of the magazine because he considered Rogers’ positions too conciliatory.

Beside Rogers had to face the attacks of Nordic orthodoxy, committed to preserve the “purity” of the Modernism of the ‘30s. On this front the highlight was the famous article by Reyner Banham entitled “The Neoliberty. The Italian Retreat from Modern Architecture” [4], published in the British magazine *The Architectural Review* as an official opinion of the same. Banham's article was motivated by the publication in 1958 in *Casabella-continuità* of works of architecture too close to a possible but uncertain revival of *Art Nouveau* and *Liberty*, such as the Bottega d'Erasmus in Turin (1953-1956) [11], a work by Roberto Gabetti and Aimaro d'Isola [16] (fig. 8), and further on of the Torre Velasca in Milan (1950-1958) by BBPR⁶ [5].

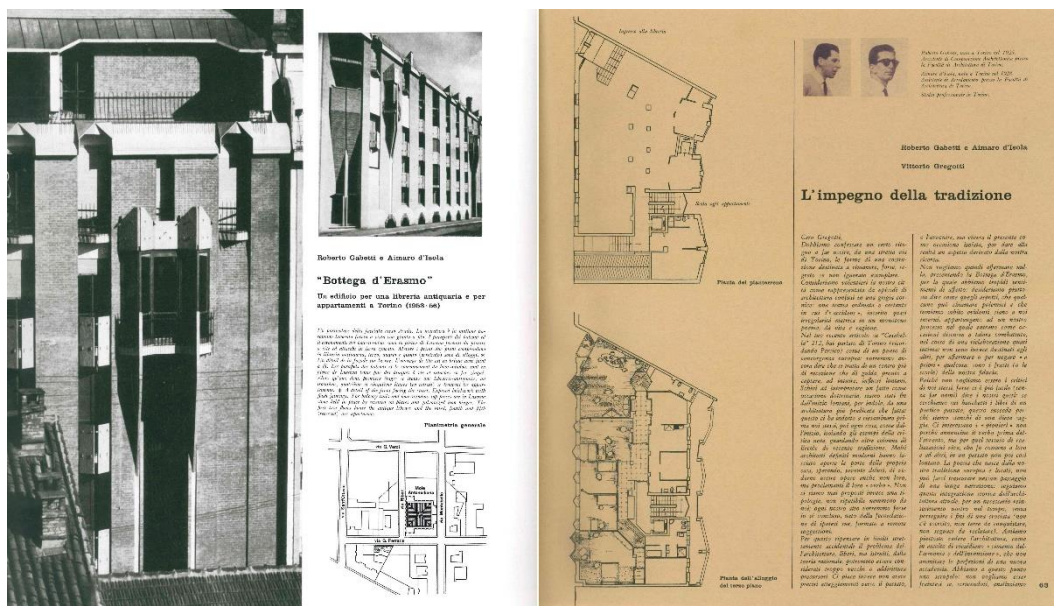


Fig 8. Bottega d'Erasmus presentation on *Casabella*. Source: [16]

Banham stated that those buildings, in spite of their involvement in modernist architecture, were conservative and submitted to historic styles; in a few words he considered them reactionary and an outcome of a deplorable attitude that should be considered as a childhood regression [4].

⁶ BBPR stands for Banfi, Belgiojoso, Peressutti, Rogers. This was one of the most important architecture office of Italian Modernism. Banfi died in 1945 in the Nazi lager of Gusen.

The point was that the Velasca shape, went beyond the simple appearance but expressed a narrative meaning referred to historical time of Milan: the visibility of the “skeleton structure” was a prominent stylistic feature of the modernist (and Italian) architecture of the '50 while the powerful expression that molds the material like a magma represents the energy of Milan that was rising up from the World War II ruins. The solid façades wall and the windowing rhythm recall the historical housing of the context while the overhanging volume and the ribs evoke the project by Filarete for the Sforzesco Castle and the gothic loadbearing frame of the Duomo respectively [9].

The Bottega d'Erasmus, by the other hand, was a refined allusions to the architecture of the 19th Century addressed to the high bourgeoisie.

Both the Velasca and the Bottega d'Erasmus, as well as many other Italian modernist buildings of the same period, achieved to find a compromise between the modernist idea of progress and the exaltation of the qualities of the materials, the warmth and flexibility of the forms and an empirical attitude related to the handcrafted world [19].

Banham's thought could not be more opposed to this design philosophy, very well represented by Rogers: the first remained trapped within the limits of the machine's age, with the consequent trusting in technological progress; the second - who responded harshly with the article "Evolution of Architecture: Reply to the Keeper of the Fridges" – [26] considering as a fundamental methodological issue the relationship between project and context, in a symmetrical way to the relationship between present and past.

“To consider the environment means to consider history”: this statement by Rogers could summarize the proposals of the theory of “environmental pre-existences” [25, 4] since it contained a methodological approach aimed at maintaining a continuous confrontation between the project and the environment. Not by chance in the first number directed by Rogers (199) *Casabella*⁷, the Borsalino building in Alessandria by Gardella and the housing blocks in viale Etiopia in Rome by Ridolfi had been published. Both buildings, although in different ways, pointed out, compared to Nordeuropean orthodoxy, a different way of interpreting modernity, taking in account the context and making a critical reinterpretation of the past.

Even from the most remarkable architecture magazines in Barcelona, there was a certain interest in Milanese architecture. Especially *Cuadernos de Arquitectura*⁸ went on this issue: apart from a general article on the historical Milanese architecture, a significant essay was published on the attention to the context by the BBPR group and a monographic article written by O. Bohigas on the architecture of Vico Magistretti [8].

Besides in the famous (and, apparently, anonymous) editorial in number 32 of *Cuadernos* (1958), entitled “Crisis or continuity?” (fig. 10) the Rogers' topic of continuity was retaken as a critical question aimed at overcoming the most orthodox rationalism [13]. A further influence can also be recognized in Bohigas' historiographical construction aiming to codify a historical process initiated with Modernism, continued with the rationalism of GATCPAC, which, after the war, went on by the Group R and Realism. Bohigas after a first moment of furious rejection, found in Rogers' theory of “environmental pre-existences” a clear and concrete reference, extremely adequate to achieve a synthesis between the critical recovery of tradition, of which the historical context is a priority manifestation, and a new identity of Catalan architecture to whom all the architects of its generation were called to join [7].

⁷ Before the world War 2 Casabella had been directed by Giuseppe Pagano. Although Pagano joined the fascism during the WW2 he supported the partisan fight against Nazi taking part in Italian Resistance.. He was imprisoned and died in 1945 at Mauthausen.

⁸ *Cuadernos de Arquitectura* was the official magazine of the Catalan Architects board since 1944 to 1970. Since 1971 to 1980 the name changed in *Cuadernos de Arquitectura y Urbanismo*. After 1981 it was published in Catalan and English and took the name *Quaderns* till now.

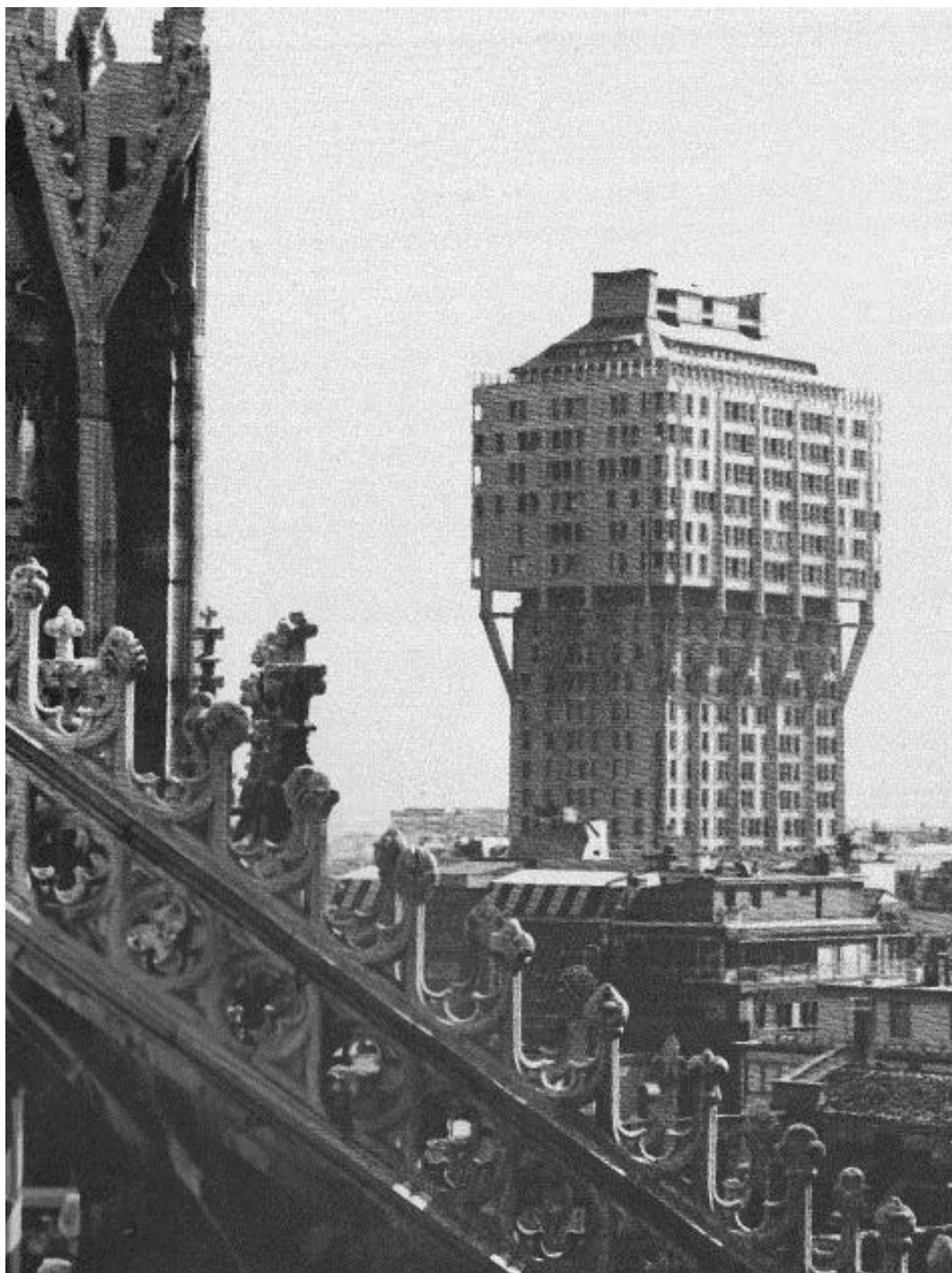


Fig 9 Torre Velasca: [15]



Fig 10. The article „Crisis or continuity” published on Cuadernos. Source: [13]

The presence and figure of Oriol Bohigas in the Milanese publications was addressed to the topic of the city and the relations between its parts. In April 1961 a work by Bohigas-Martorell appeared for the first time in a Milanese magazine. It was about the houses on Calle Pallars, to which *Domus* had devoted an extensive report with the usual black and white photos of Català-Roca and the usual short explanatory texts that underlined the correctness of the economic approach, the aptness to the urban scale and the modern furniture included in the apartments [6]. This work was very appreciated in an Italy still intellectually dominated by the communist ideology, as much for its poetic neorealism as for its programmatic content of social class: "Case per operai" (House for workers) sounded with great connotations of social and political correctness. But the real mentor of Bohigas in Milan was Vittorio Gregotti.

In 1965 the semiannual magazine *Zodiaco*, thanks to the interest of Gregotti, dedicated the number 15 entirely to modernist Spanish architecture, publishing a thematic monograph (written in Spanish in the main body of the magazine, with an Italian version at the end of it) focused on Madrid and Barcelona, that is to say what in those years was already beginning to be designated as "Madrid School" and "Barcelona School".

A rather caustic article by Bofill on the conditions of Spanish architecture and another one by Correa on teaching in architecture schools [12], followed a series of worksheets and projects by various authors that presented buildings that until then were little or nothing known in Italy (pp. 44-130). If we limited ourselves to Catalan architecture, the following authors appeared: Bofill (houses on Johann Sebastian Bach Street, apartments in Castelldefels, Gaudí neighborhood in Reus); Bonet i Castellana, Martorell and Bohigas (; Bonet i Castellana and Puig i Torné (Meridiana Track for dogs racing); Bonet i Castellana (house La Ricarda); Carvajal (Spanish pavilion at the World Fair in New York); Coderch (house on calle Johann Sebastian Bach); Martorell-Bohigas-Mackay (house in calle Secretario Coloma, house in the Avenida Meridiana, house in calle Guinardó).

If we go ahead, between the end of the '70 and the '90, both *Casabella* and *Lotus International* magazines, both by the Electa publishing house, published a series of articles on the transformations of Barcelona, related to the turnaround democratic in Spanish politics since the death of Franco (1975), to the preparation of the city to host the 1992 Olympic Games.

Throughout these writings, in a coherent way, and in tune with a significant part of the Milanese architectural culture that thought, not quite wrongly, that one could influence the

overall form of the city through the architectural design, Bohigas argued the possibility of transforming the city through architectural projects. Such projects should work at the medium /small-scale taking the responsibility to transform part of the urban tissue so that they could be more effective than the urban planning.



Fig 12. MBM social housing in Calle Pallars, Barcelona. Source: [24]

This was a clairvoyant position that demonstrated through a rich apparatus of drawings and projects that, indeed, the character of the city could be influenced and enhanced through the urban architecture, a principle that was extremely well received by Milanese architectural and urban culture project. The Milan School flagship (almost by a theoretical point of view) was the attention toward the context. Architecture was not supposed to design a machine or a technological object but an “organism” with an attitude aimed to set relationship with the environment.

But the presence of these numerous writings appeared in Milan about Barcelona concealed a turning point: on the one hand, Barcelona began to transform effectively going for the large urban renewal of the '80 and the milestone of the Olympic Games. On the other hand, Milan after the depletion of the master generation like Rogers, Albini, Gardella, Caccia Dominioni, Ponti, and others, fell in a devolution, especially in the capacity to transform the urban structure in an organic and unitary sense: the city is growing and the large subsidized housing urban districts of the '60 leave place to the urban sprawl; the compact city changes with randomly developments in which in the last fifteen years some skyscraper dropped somewhere in the city every so often.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Milan and Barcelona between the '50s and the '60s were involved in an undeniable mutual fascination showed by the milanese architectural magazines.

Domus, under the direction of Ponti was a type of magazine completely different from *Casabella*. If Rogers dealt with the context, Ponti paid more attention to architecture as an isolate artifact, or as a set of singular artifacts, where relations, if any, had to do with the microscale of the house and the interior architecture. *Casabella*, however, had a greater influence on the theoretical positions (or at least on the formal models) of the Barcelona architects, especially in the second half of its history under the direction of Rogers. If the Coderch-Ponti-Domus triad was, above all, a phenomenon originated by the friendship between the two architects, *Casabella* seems to have contributed in a more substantial, although not linear, way to that "profitable exchange of ideas" proposed by Pizza-Rovira. between Barcelona and Milan [21, 15].

What distinguishes Milan and Barcelona's architecture from rash professionalism is its capacity to establish precise design topics and treat them coherently: the buildings were seen as architectural entities bounded to the city, and as a part of the urban fabric and not an object of design. Indeed, one of the elements of continuity between the Schools of Barcelona and those of Milan is to consider architecture as a representation of its construction: the typological and technical choices give consistency to the architectural entity, combining it with the narrative intention what together make the form meaningful. In concrete terms, the formal aspects are not derived from volubility but must comply with grammatical and syntactic rules upon which the coherence between elements derives.

Federico Correa Ruiz (1924), was another great protagonist of the relations between Barcelona and Milan. In 1951 while he was working in the Coderch's studio, he attended the course that CIAM organized in Venice in 1952, where he met the great protagonists of Milanese architecture: Rogers, Albini, Gardella, Gregotti, De Carlo, Ponti, Magistretti, Aulenti. The fascination that Milan produced in the young people of Barcelona, can be understood, in an interview that Correa left with Jorge Torres in 1990: "The most surprising thing for us was the enormous affinity between Milan and Barcelona. It is very curious to find you a city like Milan [...] because the professors we met in Venice were all from Milan [...] even today it amuses me to analyze why we are immediately so close to these people of Milan, as if we were in our own house, there, in Milan. Milan is the city of work, of push and progress forward, respectful of traditions while being aware of the present. It is curious because the parallel of the attitude of Milan with that of Barcelona, and the attitude of Rome with that of Madrid is easy: Milan looks at Rome as we look at Madrid. Rome is individualistic, groups are formed in Milan; in Rome this individualism makes many fireworks, but in the end nothing is done; that is what we have always thought of Madrid, where people talk a lot, but then nothing is done; we are more modest in the proposals but in the end we do many more things [...] to me I was left with that longing to return to Italy after the Venice course of 1952 [27, 131, 134, 138]

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AUTHORS' NOTE

Lucchini Marco –Associate Professor at Politecnico di Milano Department of Architecture and Urban Studies. He teaches architectural and urban design at BcS and MS of Faculty of Architecture. The main field of interest are housing design, transformation of urban area and critical research on Barcelona and Milano modernist architecture. Last publications: *Piccoli borghi in abbandono percorsi di progetto* (2017); *Barcelona and Milan: Two Cities One Architecture. Typological Similarities in Residential Architecture from the 1950's - 60's* (2016 with Gaspar Jaen y Urban); *Architecture Context Responsibility. Establishing a Dialogue and Following Patterns* (eds with. A. Bonenberg)

Gaspar Jaen y Urban – PhD. Associate professor at University of Alicante. Writer and a painter as well (<https://personal.ua.es/es/gaspar-jaen/presentacion.html>). The main field of interest: history of the city and of its morphology, mutual exchange between Barcelona and Milan. Among his last publications: *Formació d'una ciutat moderna de grandària mitjana: Elx, 1740-1962. Del pont i el raval de Santa Teresa al Pla General d'Ordenació Urbana* (2017); *Nova York 1990, «Serie EGA.ua 6»* (2016). *Barcelona and Milan: Two Cities One Architecture. Typological Similarities in Residential Architecture from the 1950's - 60's* (2016 with Marco Lucchini)

Contact | Kontakt: marco.lucchini@polimi.it; gaspar.jaen@ua.es